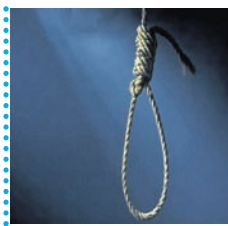




**Triptii's journey**  
Actor Triptii Dimri reflects on her career before she shot to instant fame for her appearance in *Animal*

LEISURE | P2



**15 get death penalty**  
Kerala court sentences to death 15 persons associated with PFI in connection with murder of BJP OBC wing leader Ranjith Sreenivasan

NATIONAL | P9



**Toyota retains crown**  
Toyota Motor retains its crown as the world's top-selling automaker for the fourth consecutive year

BUSINESS | P11



**India colts maul NZ**  
Musheer Khan's splendid century helps India beat New Zealand by 214 runs in their ICC U-19 World Cup match

SPORTS | P12

**SHORT TAKES**

**Budget Session begins today**

**New Delhi:** Budget Session of Parliament, the last of the present Lok Sabha, will begin Wednesday with an address by President Droupadi Murmu to a joint sitting, as the government sought cooperation of opposition parties to ensure the proceedings run smoothly. P9

**Two killed in fresh Manipur violence**

**Imphal:** Two village volunteers were killed and two others injured after their camp was attacked in Manipur Tuesday, police said. The incident happened at the camp situated near Kadangband village in Lamshang area at the border of the Imphal West and Kangpokpi districts, they said. The deceased were identified as N Michael, 33, and M Khaba, 23, they added. P9

**Soren surfaces, chairs meeting**

**Ranchi:** Ending suspense over his whereabouts and intense political drama, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Tuesday reached his official residence in Ranchi and chaired a meeting of his alliance MLAs, a day ahead of the ED is to question him in a money laundering case. The JMM leader came by road from Delhi, travelling more than 1,250 km. P9

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



No, not a word against Nitish Kumar! For all you know, he might be back with us again tomorrow

**MARKET WATCH**

INDEX	BOURSES	VARIATION
SENSEX	71139.906	↓ 801.67
NIFTY	21522.10	↓ 215.50
DOLLAR	83.11	↓ ₹0.03
EURO	90.16	↑ ₹0.09
GOLD	₹62,781	↑ ₹595
SILVER	₹72,651	↑ ₹274

**WEATHER**

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	29.6°C	28.0°C
Min Temp	15.0°C	14.5°C
Humidity	64%	63%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

**FORECAST**  
FOG/MIST IN THE MORNING



**DAREDEVILRY ON DISPLAY:** Bombay Sappers personnel perform at an event commemorating 100 years of the Iconic War Memorial of the Bombay Sappers Group at Dighi hills in Pune, Tuesday. PFI PHOTO

**Three CRPF personnel killed in Naxal attack**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**Raipur, Jan 30:** At least three CRPF personnel, including two commandos of its elite jungle warfare unit CoBRA, were killed and 14 others injured in an encounter with Naxalites along the border of Sukma and Bijapur districts of Chhattisgarh Tuesday, police said.  
Among the three slain personnel, two belonged to CoBRA's 201st battalion and one to the CRPF's 150th battalion, a senior police officer said.  
The Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) is the elite jungle warfare unit of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The exchange of fire occurred near Tekalgudem village when a joint team of security personnel was out on a search operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P said.  
On Monday, a new camp of security personnel was set up in Tekalgudem, a Maoist stronghold along the inter-district border, around 450 km away from the capital Raipur, he said. The personnel of the STF, District Reserve Guard and CoBRA, were carrying out a search in nearby Jonaguda-Aliguda villages when Naxals opened fire, he said.

**Corruption goes up**

South Asian neighbours Pakistan (133) and Sri Lanka (115) grapple with debt burdens and ensuing political instability

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 30:** In what has come as a dampener to the much publicised success story or touted global clout of India, a freshly released report of a well-known global anti-corruption watchdog has claimed that the country has slipped both in terms of ranking and score among the perceived corrupt nations in the world. While Transparency International had placed India at 85th rank in the corruption list among 180 countries in 2022 with a score of 40, in 2023, the country finds itself at the 93rd slot, while losing one more point in the scoring index, at 39.  
However, India's overall score remained largely unchanged, according to the report.  
The index, which ranks the countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.  
"India (39) shows score fluctuations small enough that no firm conclusions can be drawn on any significant change. However, ahead of the elections, India sees further narrowing of civic space, including through the passage of a (telecommunication) bill that could be a 'grave threat' to fundamental rights," the report said.



**71%**  
of the countries across Asia and the Pacific have a CPI score below the regional average score of 45 and the global average of 43 out of 100

In South Asia, both Pakistan (133) and Sri Lanka (115) grapple with their respective debt burdens and ensuing political instability, it said. "However, the two countries have strong judicial oversight, which is helping to keep the government in check. The Supreme Court of Pakistan strengthened citizens' right to information by expanding this right under Article 19A of its Constitution to previously restricted institutions," it said.  
The report said as Bangladesh (149) emerges from the least developed country (LDC) status, with economic growth supporting a continued reduction in poverty and improving living conditions, the flow of information on the public sector is hindered amidst an ongoing crackdown against the press.  
The report said as the Asia Pacific region faces a big 2024 election year, with people coming out to vote in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Solomon Islands, South Korea and Taiwan, the 2023 CPI reveals

another year of little to no meaningful progress towards curbing corruption. Seventy-one per cent of the countries across Asia and the Pacific have a CPI score below the regional average score of 45 and the global average of 43 out of 100, it added.  
For sixth year in a row, Denmark has topped the ranking, with a score of 90 while Finland and New Zealand follow closely with scores of 87 and 85, respectively.  
Norway (84), Singapore (83), Sweden (82), Switzerland (82), the Netherlands (79), Germany (78) and Luxembourg (78) completed the top 10 this year.  
Noting that China (76) has made headlines with its aggressive anti-corruption crackdown by punishing more than 3.7 million officials for corruption over the last decade, the report said a closer study of the cases with guilty verdicts found that public officials often use corruption as a way to drive up their income.

**Driver saves 60 before stroke death**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Nilagiri, Jan 30:** Braving a severe heart attack while at the wheels, a bus driver in Balasore district saved the lives of about 60 passengers before he died Tuesday, police said.  
The incident took place at Patapur Chhak on Panchalingeswar Road under this block in Balasore district early in the morning. The deceased was identified as Mohammed Kaptan of Howrah area in neighbouring West Bengal.  
Quoting preliminary information, police said that the bus (WB-76A-6328), carrying tourists from West Bengal, was proceeding towards



Panchalingeswar Temple in the district when the driver suffered a heart attack.  
As soon as he felt pain, the driver stopped the bus on the side of the road and lost consciousness on the steering. Panicked passengers called the locals who rushed Kaptan in a 108-ambulance to the nearby Nilagiri sub-divisional hospital. However, he was declared dead by doctors on arrival, police said.  
Amit Das, one of the passengers, said, "The driver suddenly fell sick and halted the bus. As soon as the vehicle stopped on the side of the road, he fainted. He was rushed to the hospital by local people where doctors pronounced him dead."  
The passengers and local people applauded the presence of mind and alertness of the driver. Later, locals sent back the passengers in the same bus to Panchalingeswar shrine.

**Imran gets 10 yrs in jail**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, Jan 30:** In a major blow to his bid to return to power in the February 8 general elections, former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is already serving a three-year jail term after being convicted of corruption, was Tuesday sentenced to 10 years in prison by a special court for leaking State secrets in 2022.  
The decision to sentence Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi was announced by special court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain during the hearing of the case held at the special court in Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi established



under the stringent Official Secrets Act.  
The controversy first emerged March 27, 2022, when Khan — less than a month before his ouster in April 2022 — while addressing a public rally waved a letter before the crowd, claiming that it was a cipher from a foreign nation that had conspired with his political rivals to have his government overthrown.

**Blue Flag tag for Sunapur beach**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Jan 30:** After Puri, Sunapur beach in Ganjam district has received the prestigious Blue Flag certification from Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in Denmark.  
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wrote on X, "Glad to share that #Sunapur Beach in #Ganjam, one of the picturesque beaches of #Odisha has received the prestigious #BlueFlag certification from @FEEInt. This eco-label, by ensuring stringent environmental standards, cleanliness, and tourist-friendly amenities will further boost tourism. #OdishaLeads"

**Ayodhya's Korean connect through royal wedding**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ayodhya, Jan 30:** A teenage princess from Ayodhya had crossed the ocean in a boat some 2,000 years ago, sailed 4,500 km to Korea and married King Kim Suro who founded the Gaya Kingdom in the north Asian country, according to a Korean legend. The princess, Suriratna, then became Queen Heo Hwang-ok.  
The fable is hardly known in India, nor is the fact that some 60 lakh people in South Korea, who consider themselves descendants of Suriratna, consider Ayodhya as their maternal home. It was therefore natural that many of them eagerly watched the Ram



Queen Heo Memorial Park on the banks of Sarayu river in Ayodhya. PFI PHOTO

Temple consecration online from their homes January 22.  
And now they can't wait to visit Ayodhya to see the grand new

Ram temple complex up close.  
Many members of the Karak clan visit Ayodhya every year to pay tributes at the memorial of Queen Heo Hwang-ok at the Queen Heo Memorial Park, which was set up on the banks of Sarayu river in Ayodhya in 2001 in a partnership between the Uttar Pradesh government and the Gimhae city in South Korea.  
"Ayodhya is very special to us as we see it as our grandmother's home," said Kim Chil-su, the secretary general of the Central Karak Clan Society. He was among those who attended the January 22 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony of the new idol of Ram Lalla at the temple, a few kilometres away from the

Queen Heo Memorial Park.  
Spread over a 2,000 sq m area, the park features a meditation hall, pavilions dedicated to the queen and king, pathways, a fountain, murals and audio video facilities. The pavilions are built in a typical Korean style with tiled sloping roof.  
"We visit Ayodhya every year to pay tributes at the memorial and this time we plan to go to the new Ram temple too. We watched the ceremony online and what a feeling it was. I haven't been to the old makeshift shrine but have read about the dispute," Yu-Jin Lee, who plans to travel with 22 others to the city in February, told PTI over phone from South Korea.

Queen Heo Hwang-ok is revered as the progenitor mother of the Gimhae Heo families, according to an ancient Korean history text, "Samguk Yusa". It states that the queen came to Korea in AD 48 from "Ayuta". She is still revered as the progenitor mother of the Gimhae Heo families of the Karak clan.  
In a post on X, the South Korean embassy had also congratulated India for the consecration ceremony January 22. "The place holds a great symbolic importance for Korea-India relations based on the matrimonial link between Queen Suriratna (Heo Hwang-ok) from Ayodhya and King Kim Suro from Gaya (Korea) in 48 AD," it said.

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# leisure



## MARTIN SCORSESE SAYS HE'S TOO SHORT TO GO TO THEATRES

Filmmaker Martin Scorsese is too short to go to the theatre because there is always someone taller blocking his view. "I don't attend public screenings. People talk and move around a lot. I'm short and there's always a big person in front of me," says Scorsese.

## SPEARS APOLOGISES TO TIMBERLAKE

Pop icon Britney Spears has apologised to Justin Timberlake for the claims she made in her book. She took to Instagram to say she is 'deeply sorry' if she offended any of the people she cares about including her ex-boyfriend.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
Without apparent reason you may go into your shell today. No doubt you will acknowledge the contribution of others, but Ganesha says you have to do more than that; you will have to share your knowledge with your peers. Besides this, Ganesha says you need to cut down on your spending.

**TAURUS**  
Ganesha sees you being very planned and focuses, poised and practical in handling your affairs today. You'll be able to take identify the best strategy, course of action that the situations demand. This day you would be performing like a specialist, a real expert and will not fail to accomplish whatever you have set out to do.

**GEMINI**  
You are on your way to falling in love. Your parents or children are likely to fetch you substantial gains, financially or otherwise. You may want to make a few changes at work, probably a new business strategy.

**CANCER**  
You will not only make plans, but will also act on them. So you can save money, time and energy for creative pursuits. The quality of your work and accomplishments will be high. Your creativity plays a key role in your accomplishments in career or business.

**LEO**  
You will need to work hard to achieve your goals today. Those who are serious about their work will be easily able to tide over the day. You need to be cautious today. Not only at work, but even in personal relationships, you need to be on guard.

**VIRGO**  
Issues regarding religious beliefs and spirituality will surface today. Pursue your goals single-mindedly to attain success in the field of your choice, and exploit your abilities and talents to the hilt, advises Ganesha. You will be more logical and calculative, rather than emotional, in matters of your relationships.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says that today in your office you should be very careful in your work. It is likely that your superiors will not be happy about your work or your ability today. Those of you who are businessmen should try and delay sending off tenders today. Those who have given their job interviews may not get a favorable response to it.

**SCORPIO**  
At work, you would want to change the perspective with which people see you. Your colleagues recognise you as the emerging alpha-ion. Ideas and opinions will impress your bosses. But keep a level head and learn where to stop, even when winning, counsels Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Lengthy business meetings keep you occupied almost throughout the day. You may also do some value addition to your work by taking co-workers' suggestions and inputs, says Ganesha. Implementation of these inputs will prove highly beneficial in the long run.

**CAPRICORN**  
The day will be of paramount significance as you are likely to meet someone who will be associated with you for life, says Ganesha. Also, relationships and relatives will keep you busy for major part of the day. You may not find it interesting, but you will not have any options either.

**AQUARIUS**  
The day begins on high note. You work hard, put your best foot forward and at the end get the final output as per your requirements. Romantic and beautiful, the setting Sun will bring the softer side of your personality to the fore as you will spend the evening with your sweetheart, predicts Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
For you, today may all be work and no play, says Ganesha. This, however, will not stop you from putting in extra efforts to finish your pending projects and to meet your deadlines. But then who else but a Pisces is known to handle the pain nonchalantly without bemoaning the lack of pleasure?

## Triptii reflects on her pre-Animal journey

**Mumbai:** Triptii Dimri shot to instant fame after her appearance in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal*. Prior to that, Triptii had headlined several acclaimed movies. In a recent interview, the actress reflected on her journey before landing a role in *Animal*.

The *Qala* actress said OTT has contributed a lot to her career. She got all the love and recognition from the streaming platforms before *Animal*, added Triptii. The actress further recalled the initial days of her career when people would tell her that there was not enough work. However, the

times have changed, and today everybody is busy with work on OTT or something else.

"When I started off as an actor, very few projects would be happening. I would meet people, and they would say 'kaam hi nahi hai yaar (There is no work)' People would wait for even six months to get acting jobs. Today however, there are so many opportunities to do work," she was quoted as saying.

In addition to this, the actress went on to affirm that she would just want to work which is 'challenging' without thinking if it would be released on an OTT platform.

The actress will be next seen in Dharma Productions' *Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam* which will also star Vicky Kaushal and Ammy Virk in the lead roles.

## MRUNAL DESCRIBES ONE OF CAREER'S TOUGHEST SCENES

**Mumbai:** Actress Mrunal Thakur shared a personal experience while filming *Hi Nanna* and revealed a poignant breakdown that added emotional depth to the film.

"While filming the hospital scene in *Hi Nanna* where I discovered that the child is born with health conditions was an emotionally charged experience for me especially when I am not a mother to express that pain. I prayed thinking no mother in the world has to go through this kind of pain," Mrunal said.

She added: "Witnessing a heartbreaking YouTube video of a mother losing her child to an earthquake shortly before filming intensified my emotions. The profound pain is

indescribable in words or emotions that the scene evoked. The depth of the scene touched a raw nerve, and it took some time for me to compose myself before moving forward."

"It is one of the toughest scenes in my entire career. As an actor, such moments are both challenging and cathartic," shared Mrunal Thakur.

*Hi Nanna* is now available in Hindi on Netflix as *Hi Papa*. She starred opposite Nani. The film is directed by Shouryuv.

The movie explores a compelling narrative that resonates with viewers.



## NSD's int'l theatre fest in City from February 8

'Taj Mahal Ka Tender,' the first play of Bharat Rang Mahotsav, will be performed under the direction of Odisha-born Chittaranjan Tripathy, the director of National School of Drama, New Delhi

**BHUBANESWAR:** The National School of Drama (NSD) New Delhi every year organises the International Theatre Festival of India, also known as Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM) or Bharangam, offering theatre-goers and cultural enthusiasts a rich tapestry of Indian and global theatre traditions.

BRM's 25th edition will begin February 1 in Mumbai and witness over 150 performances, along with workshops, discussions, and master classes across 15 Indian cities, including Bhubaneswar.

The festival in the City will commence in the City from February 8 with the Hindi play *Taj Mahal Ka Tender*. Written by Ajay Shukla and to be performed by Repertory Company (New Delhi), the drama is directed by Odisha-born Chittaranjan Tripathy, the present director of National School of Drama, New Delhi.

The other plays to be staged over the next five days are: *Agni Aur Barkha* (Language - Hindi; Playwright - Girish Karnad;



Direction - KS Rajendran; Group- Sri Ram Centre, New Delhi), *Chitraganda* (Language - Bengali; Playwright - Rabindra Nath Tagore; Direction - Zahid Repon; Group- Swapnadal, Dhaka), *Tadanta* (Language - Assamese; Playwright - GB Priestley; Direction - Dakshina Sharma; Group- Silpa Kanon, Nagaon, Assam), *Naagmandal* (Language - Hindi; Playwright - Girish Karnad; Direction - Satyabrata Rout; Group- Black Pearl Arts, New Delhi), *Asharasya Prothom Diboshe* (Language - Bengali; Playwright - Mohan Rakesh; Translation - Anshuman Bhowmik; Direction - Alok Basu; Group- Theatre Factory, Dhaka), according to an NSD release.

## Indira Viswanathan joins Thunderbolts

**Los Angeles:** Half Indian-half Swiss actress Geraldine Indira Viswanathan has joined the cast of *Thunderbolts*, replacing Ayo Edebiri in an undisclosed role after the Emmy-winning *The Bear* star dropped out of the project due to scheduling.

Viswanathan joins a massive ensemble cast of actors playing some of the Marvel Cinematic Universe's best known anti-heroes, including Sebastian Stan as Bucky Barnes, Florence Pugh, David Harbour, Wyatt Russell, Hannah John-Kamen, Olga Kurylenko and Julia Louis-Dreyfus, reports Variety.

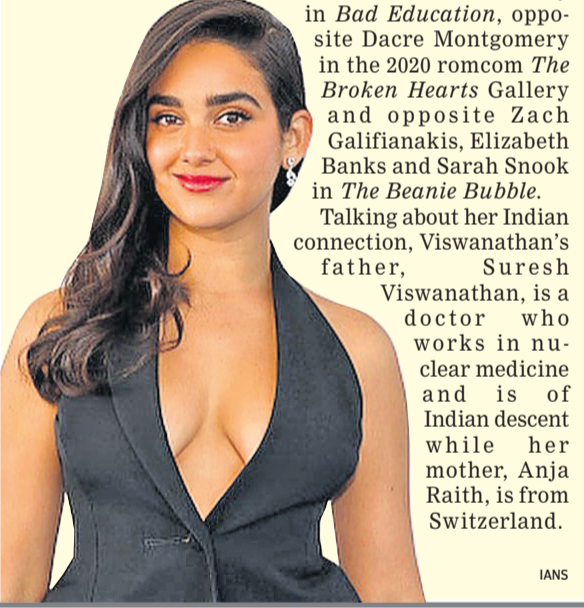
Although specific plot details remain top secret, the movie will effectively serve as Marvel's version of the DC's anti-hero team the 'Suicide Squad', with the characters brought together to do the dirty jobs the Avengers can't do.

Since Viswanathan's career launched in the 2018 teen-comedy *Blockers*, she's appeared opposite Hugh

Jackman and Allison Janney in *Bad Education*, opposite Dacre Montgomery in the 2020 romcom *The Broken Hearts Gallery* and opposite Zach Galifianakis, Elizabeth Banks and Sarah Snook in *The Beanie Bubble*.

Talking about her Indian connection, Viswanathan's father, Suresh

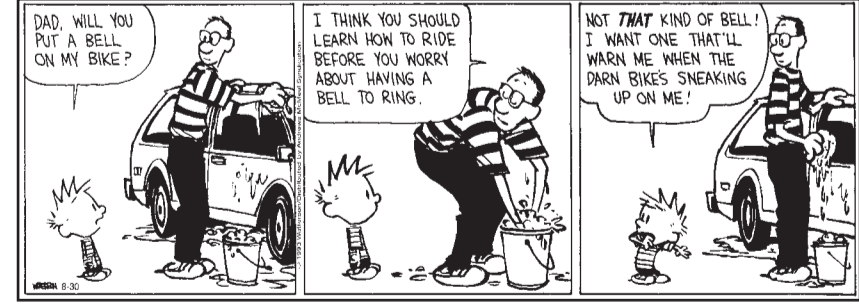
Viswanathan, is a doctor who works in nuclear medicine and is of Indian descent while her mother, Anja Raith, is from Switzerland.



### PEANUTS



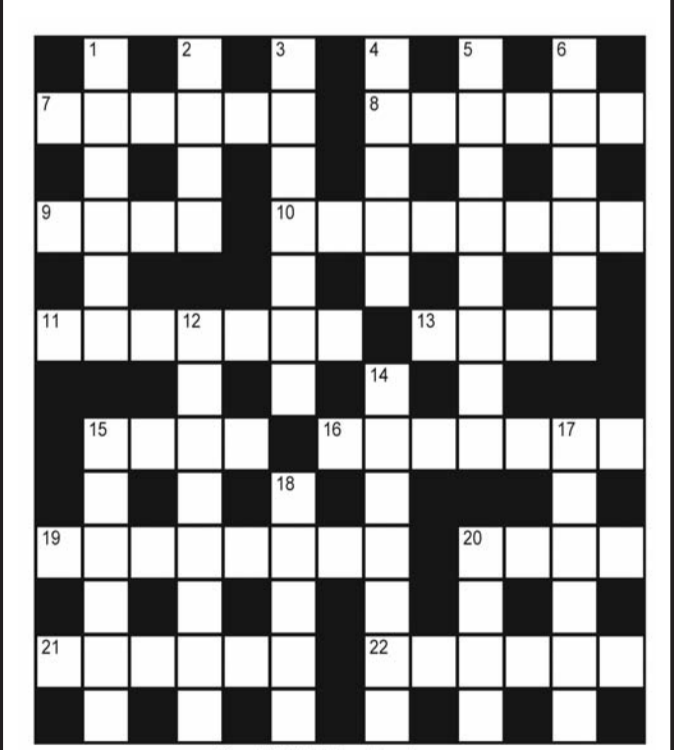
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



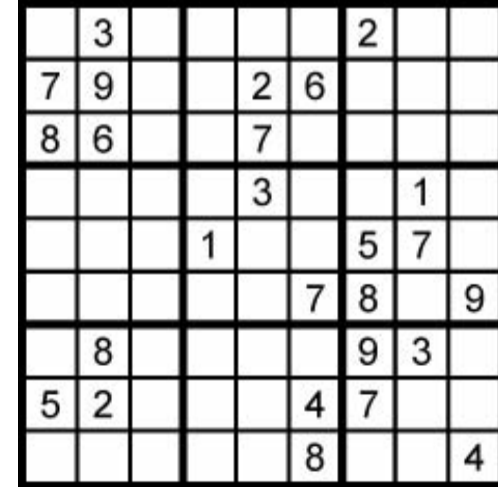
### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 That which is often returned
  - 8 Time of year
  - 9 Entice
  - 10 Easy achievement
  - 11 Haifa resident
  - 13 Night fliers
  - 15 Golf stroke
  - 16 Like a boat
  - 19 Plentiful
  - 20 Twilight
  - 21 Skeleton's place?
  - 22 Wildcat
  - Down**
  - 1 Respects
  - 2 Bloodshed
  - 3 Stoker character
  - 4 Songbirds
  - 5 Cheater on a ship?
  - 6 Saunters
  - 12 Amaze
  - 14 Court ruling, maybe
  - 15 Little rock
  - 17 Bahamas capital
  - 18 Ill-tempered
  - 20 Tambour

### SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



### SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## BARAMUNDA ISBT TO BE INAUGURATED IN MID-FEB

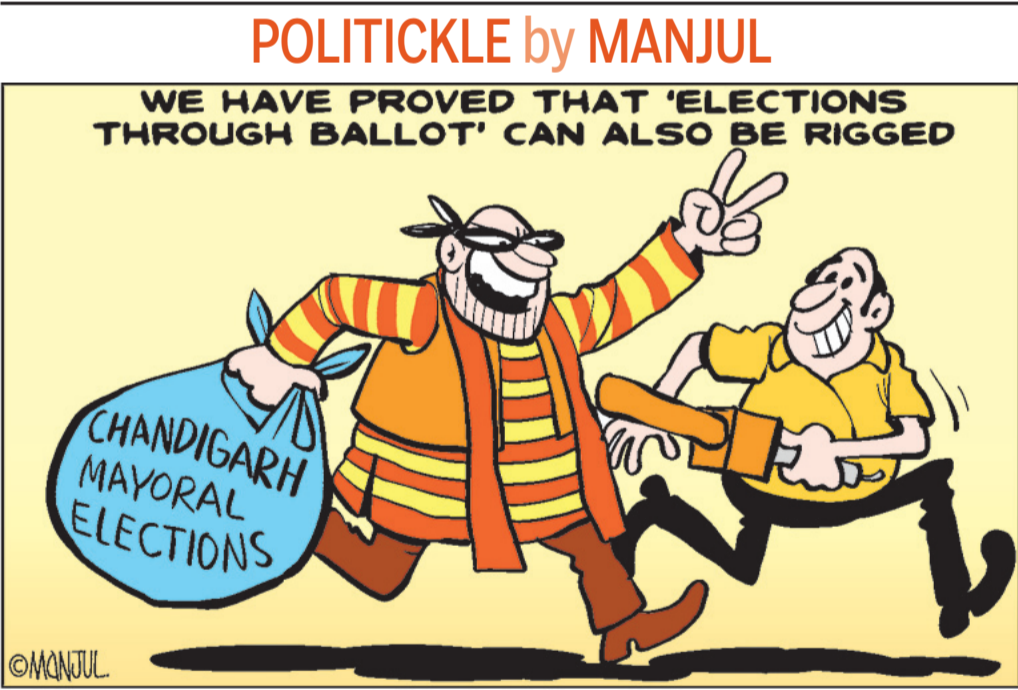
5T Chairman Kartik Pandian directs officials to expedite work at the mega world-class facility



**Bhubaneswar, Jan 30:** 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian Tuesday reviewed the progress of the work for the much-awaited inter-state bus terminal (ISBT) at Baramunda and asked the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) to ensure the project's completion ahead of its inauguration in mid-February. The ISBT is poised to become a crucial transit hub not only for the residents of Odisha but also for those from the neighbouring states. On the instruction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Pandian took stock of the upcoming facilities for commuters like waiting areas, bus bays, upcoming F&B outlets, lighting installations, and restrooms, during his early morning visit. He appreciated the Operation Control Centre (OCC) while advising officials to engage highly

tech savvy personnel to man the facility. Pandian directed officials to make provision of proper Odia signages and map facility to guide the commuters. He asked BDA team to expedite the remaining work and get the ISBT ready for dedication to people of Odisha by mid-February. Spanning over 15.5 acres of land, the ISBT, spearheaded by the BDA, aims at offering a wide range of passenger amenities, office space, parking facilities, food courts, restaurants, and commercial space. The feel and experience will be that of an airport. The ISBT is a significant project that will benefit the people of Odisha by providing a modern and efficient transportation hub. The terminal is designed to cater to the needs of passengers and provide them with a range of comfortable and convenient experience. The terminal will provide world-class travel experience to

passengers and is equipped with modern amenities such as state-of-the-art Aahaar centre, restaurants, multi-storey car parking, pick-up/drop-off facility, solar panel system, and sewage treatment plant. It also has provisions for police facilitation centre to ensure the safety of passengers, administrative building for managing the terminal operations, toilet facilities for passengers, ramp facilities for the convenience of differently-abled passengers, and baby feeding rooms for women travelling with infants. Besides, there will also be children's play area, a primary health clinic, and additional parking for seasonal buses. The ISBT will also have pre paid auto and taxi facilities. Senior officials of BDA, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation and City DCP Prateek Singh were present during the 5T Chairman's ground review.



## CRPF jawan's body found in City hotel

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 30:** Employees at a private hotel here, under the Capital Police Station limits, found the lifeless body of a jawan with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) hanging from the ceiling fan in a room, Tuesday morning. The deceased, identified as Mir Singh (42) from Rajasthan, was stationed at the CRPF 214 Battalion in Chhattisgarh, police said. Reportedly, Mir arrived in Bhubaneswar January 26 and checked into the hotel at around 4:30 pm. However, the reason behind the suspected suicide has not been established yet. Capital Police station IIC Padmanav Pradhan said the police are planning to record the statement of the deceased's family members who are likely to arrive in the evening. He said

Mir had visited the City several times in the past and would stay in the same hotel. The police are questioning the staffers of the hotel to rule out any foul play in the death of the uniformed personnel who is presumed to have died by suicide. Forensic experts collected samples from the room for lab examination. Meanwhile, sources in the police said that Mir had taken leave since January 20 and his family members were aware of it. During initial questioning, some hotel employees told the police that they had heard Mir speaking loudly with someone over phone Monday night. Police are also examining the Call Data Records (CDR) and chat details on Mir's phone to ascertain who he last spoke to, or exchanged message with, in order to obtain clues about the death.

## FIRS AGAINST POLITICAL COMMENTATOR Politicians should be thick-skinned: SC

**New Delhi, Jan 30:** "Politicians should be thick-skinned," a Supreme Court bench said Tuesday while hearing a plea of a West Bengal-based political commentator seeking protection from arrest in multiple FIRs lodged against him for his alleged objectionable remarks against the Assamese people. The bench comprising Justices B R Gvai and Sanjay Karol observed that even judges need to let go of the comments made against them in letters and interviews these days. "Politicians should be thick-skinned. We judges also need to be cautious in view of letters and interviews happening these days. If we start listening to them, we will not be able to work," Justice Gvai said. The bench was told by senior advocate Siddharth Agarwal

and advocate Ashutosh Dubey, appearing for political commentator Garga Chatterjee, that he had made certain comments on Twitter (now X) in 2020. Agarwal said a number of FIRs were registered against him in Assam and West Bengal

which needed to be clubbed and transferred to a neutral state for further investigation. Referring to the comments of then Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Agarwal said he had ordered Chatterjee's arrest according to the official statement, after which he was arrested. "On August 19, 2020, the petitioner tendered a public apology for his remarks hurting the sentiments of the people of Assam," he said. The bench asked him whether he was granted bail or not. Agarwal said that bail was given and he was granted protection from arrest in FIRs lodged in West Bengal and Assam by this court September 9, 2022. The bench then posted the matter for a final hearing on a non-miscellaneous day and asked the pleadings to be completed.

## TRIBUTES TO THE MAHATMA

Cuttack Collector Vineet Bhardwaj pays floral tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary in Cuttack, Tuesday



## Madame Tussauds NY unveils yoga guru Ramdev's wax statue

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 30:** A life-size wax figure of yoga guru Ramdev was unveiled in Delhi Tuesday by Madame Tussauds New York (NY). The event took place in the presence of the yoga guru, who also performed some 'asanas' on the occasion. The wax sculpture will be 'available for fans to meet and interact with, at Madame Tussauds New York', Merlin Entertainments said in a statement. "The unveiling of his wax figure serves as both a gift to his audience and a tribute to the yogi who continues to inspire millions, reflecting the unwavering faith of his followers in the present and projecting into the future," it said. Madame Tussauds New York spokesperson Tiago Mogodouro said Ramdev's figure represents a harmonious blend of spiritual wisdom and health, mirroring the admiration and respect he commands worldwide. "We take immense pride in honouring his contribution to yoga and wellness, anticipating that his presence will inspire our visitors to embrace the journey of self-improvement and holistic wellbeing," he was quoted as saying in the statement. According to the yoga guru, the honor given to him is not the pride of a single 'sanyasi' but of the entire country. "Today, the eyes of the whole world are on India's yoga and Ayurveda. The wave of yoga, Ayurveda and Swadeshi which was started by



Patanjali is now spreading all over the world," he said. He said it took the efforts of about 200 artists and about ₹2 crore to make the wax figure. "Whoever is born in the soil of India is a Bharat Ratna. He

should try to see what contribution he can make to establish the glory of Mother India in the world," he said. On the occasion, a documentary film based on the life of the yoga guru was also screened.

## Odisha BJP 'Gaon Chalo' campaign from Feb 9

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 30:** The Odisha BJP unit will undertake a three-day 'Gaon Chalo' (go to village) campaign from February 9 to tell the people about different schemes launched by the Central government in the last 10 years, a party leader said. BJP state vice-president Golap Mohapatra Monday said that the campaign aims to increase the saffron party's vote share to more than 50 per cent in Odisha. He said the BJP leaders will interact with about one crore people during the campaign. During the campaign, elected MLAs, MPs, panchayat and urban bodies functionaries of BJP will spend at least a day in the villages assigned to them and make people aware of different Central government schemes launched during the last 10 years.



This apart, the party workers will also verify whether the assistance and benefits provided by the Narendra Modi government at the Centre are reaching the beneficiaries. The people will be sensitized about the implementation of the welfare schemes of the Centre. Mohapatra alleged that BJD leaders were 'misappropriating' the Central assistance.

## Water is priceless, use it wisely: CM

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 30:** Terming water as priceless, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday advised farmers in the state to use the natural resource wisely. Speaking at the closing ceremony of the state-level 'Pani Panchayat Pakshya 2024' at the Lok Seva Bhawan here, Patnaik urged farmers to conserve and reuse water while opting for crop diversification. "Adopt technology for farming. This will increase yield and you will achieve success in the field of agriculture in addition to making the state a leader in this field," the CM said. He said that 'Pani Panchayat' has given farmers the right over water and at the same time also vested the responsibility of its wise use upon them. Through 'Pani Panchayat', in addition to using water efficiently, their willpower and ability to work together has increased, he added. He said that the farmers of the state can grow good crops these days due to the proper and efficient use of 'Pani Panchayat'. Throwing light on this programme meant for farmers, the



chief minister said that to date, about 40,000 'Pani Panchayats' have been formed in the state. "Now this is no longer a program, it has become a movement," the chief minister said, adding that Mega Lift has been included in it, and arrangements have also been made so that women can participate in the program in large numbers. He praised that women are doing very well in 'Pani Panchayat'. The chief minister said, "Our

farmers are our strength. If they are strengthened, Odisha will be strengthened." Patnaik said that the development of farmers is most important for him and the efforts of the state government are underway to provide sufficient water to the farmland. Highlighting the steps taken in the field of water resources, the chief minister further said that under the 5T initiative, technology is being used in irrigation projects in the state and the work

is being completed on time. Participating in the program, Water Resources Minister Tukuni Sahu said that due to the vision and sincerity of the chief minister, there has been a transformation in all areas. There has been vast improvement in the fields of agriculture and irrigation. She said that through 'Pani Panchayats', farmers can make proper use of water and produce good crops. Narrating their experiences, Mamata Das, president of Jagatsinghpur Maa Batmangala Pani Panchayat, and Madan Mohan Biswal, secretary of Ganjam Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja Pani Panchayat, said that because of 'Pani Panchayat', they could make proper use of water. "Even in low rainfall, we are getting good crops," they added. During the event, the chief minister launched a prototype of 'Pani Panchayat' and unveiled a coffee table book titled 'Secha Sahabagita 2.0'. The chief minister gave away awards and felicitated the best farmers, best 'Pani Panchayats', students who achieved success in various competitions, best projects and best administrators.

## Bank manager gets 4-yr RI in graft case

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 30:** Special Judge, CBI Cases, Bhubaneswar sentenced manager of Odisha Gramya Bank, Dadaraghati Branch, Dhenkanal to four years rigorous imprisonment in a bribery case here Tuesday. CBI had registered a case August 8, 2016 against Duryodhan Sethy, then branch manager at Odisha Gramya Bank, Dadaraghati Branch, Dhenkanal on allegations of demanding bribe from the complainant for processing a poultry loan proposal of ₹4.25 lakh in favour of his wife. A trap was laid and CBI caught the accused while accepting ₹5,000 as bribe money August 9, 2016. After investigation, a chargesheet was filed October 27, 2016. The Court held the accused guilty after trial.

**ODISHA TABLEAU BAGS 1ST PRIZE**

# It's a matter of pride, says CM



The tableau showcased women's empowerment in the state as well as its rich handicraft and handloom sector during the 75th Republic Day parade at the Kartavya Path in the national capital

It presented by Odisha has finished first in the judge's choice category while Gujarat's tableau has won the top slot in people's choice category

Artisans of the heritage crafts village of Raghurajpur near Puri created 'Kandarpa Hati' -- a popular 'pattachitra' design depicting 'Krishna Leela'

Gajendra Sahoo had designed the tableau, received the trophy and certificate from Union Minister of State for Tourism Ajay Bhatt at a ceremony in Delhi.

Odisha's Assistant Information Officer Harprasad Mahapatra, artist Kirti Kishore Maharana and Gajendra Sahoo receive trophy and certificate from Union Minister of State for Tourism Ajay Bhatt in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 30: As Odisha's tableau that participated in the Republic Day parade in New Delhi bagged the first prize Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said it was a matter of pride.

The tableau showcased women's empowerment in the state as well as its rich handicraft and handloom sector during the 75th Republic Day parade at the Kartavya Path in the national capital.

"It is a matter of pride to be adjudged the best tableau in the Republic Day parade in New Delhi. The theme of women's empowerment is beautifully conveyed in magnificent artworks of painting and handicraft and cottage industries. My best wishes to the sculptors who made it so interesting," Patnaik posted on X.

A total of 16 tableaux from states and Union territories, and

nine from central ministries and departments had rolled down the Kartavya Path during the grand celebrations which was graced by French President Emmanuel Macron.

The states and Union territories that presented their tableaux included Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana.

"The tableau presented by Odisha has finished first in the judge's choice category while Gujarat's tableau has won the top slot in people's choice category," a senior official said.

In the judge's category, Gujarat finished second while Tamil Nadu was ranked third, he said.

Odisha's Assistant Information Officer Harprasad Mahapatra and eminent artist Kirti Kishore Maharana, who along with

## Dense fog likely in fifteen dists during next 24 hours



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 30: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday warned of dense fog at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Koraput, Rayagada, and Mayurbhanj during the next 24 hours.

The weather agency has issued a 'Yellow Warning' for these districts.

Besides, shallow to moderate fog is very likely to occur at a few

places over the districts of coastal Odisha and at one or two places of interior Odisha during the same period.

Further, the IMD has forecast dense fog in Bhubaneswar and its neighbourhood for the next 24 hours and the maximum and minimum temperatures are likely around 31°C and 17°C, respectively. The Met department said that Wednesday dense fog is likely at one or two places in Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Cuttack, Khurda, Angul, Dhenkanal, Nayagarh, Kandhamal, Sambalpur, Subarnapur, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Boudh districts.

Shallow to moderate fog may also occur at a few places in Coastal districts and at one or two places in interior Odisha.

## Playing musical instrument keeps brain sharp in old age

Continuing to play a musical instrument, particularly the piano, into later life has been linked with a sharper brain in a new study. Researchers found that the benefits included an improved memory and a better ability to solve complex tasks, known as executive functions.

The researchers, including those at the University of Exeter, UK, reviewed data from more than a thousand adults over the age of 40 years to see the effect of playing a musical instrument or singing in a choir on brain health.

Their work also suggested that singing too was linked to better brain health, although the team said this may also be due to the



The findings, published in the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, showed that playing a musical instrument, particularly the piano, is associated with improved memory and executive function -- the ability to solve complex tasks

social factors of being part of a choir or group. Their findings are published in the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry.

To determine whether musicality helped keep the brain

## Woman relieved of chest tumour at KIMS



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 30: In a significant medical development, a 25-year-old woman successfully recovered from chest tumour surgery at the Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) here Tuesday.

Sources at KIMS said that the patient, who had been suffering from chest pain, shortness of breath, and a persistent cough for two years, underwent a chal-

lenging surgery recently to get a tumour weighing approximately 4-4.5 kilograms removed.

"The successful removal of the tumour marks a significant medical milestone, being one of the largest chest tumours ever extracted in that anatomical region. The patient's journey to recovery was fraught with challenges," said a hospital staffer.

Despite seeking medical help at numerous hospitals over the two years, her condition had re-

mained undiagnosed and untreated. It was not until she came to KIMS that the gravity of her situation was fully understood, informed the staffer.

A collaborative effort between the oncology and cardiothoracic and vascular surgery (CTVS) departments helped doctors discover the sizable tumour, which was exerting significant pressure on her heart and lungs.

The complexity of the case required expertise of a multi-disciplinary team. "A team of doctors treated the patient. It included Chandan Kumar Ray Mohapatra, associate professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Subrat Sahoo, professor of general surgery, Jogomaya Patnaik, associate professor of medical oncology and the consultant cardiac anesthesiologists, Ashok Badmal and Gyanaranjan Mishra," informed the staffer.

Promoting musical education could be a valuable part of public health initiatives to promote a protective lifestyle for brain health, along with encouraging older adults to return to music in later life

ANNE CORBETT | PROFESSOR OF DEMENTIA RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

larger PROTECT study, which has been running for 10 years and includes over 25,000 people.

"Overall, we think that being musical could be a way of harnessing the brain's agility and resilience, known as cognitive reserve," said study author, Anne Corbett, Professor of Dementia Research

## IIIT Bhubaneswar signs MoU with BIS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 30: In a move to establish a significant nexus amongst academia, industry, and government organisation, IIIT Bhubaneswar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) here Tuesday.

The collaboration between IIIT-Bhubaneswar and BIS will aim for fruitful growth and mutual development through new research initiatives in the areas of standardisation, conformity assessment and quality processes.

The partnership will explore the introduction of short-term education programmes and improvement of infrastructure and laboratory facilities to boost wider research, teaching and education in the fields related to standardisation.

IIIT Bhubaneswar director Ashish Ghosh and BIS Bhubaneswar branch director AK Purohit were present for the signature ceremony while BIS Scientist-G and Deputy Director



General, Eastern Region Dibyendu Chakrabarti joined the occasion in online mode.

Speaking on this occasion, Chakrabarti underscored the increasing need for such collaborations for creating awareness and interest in these topics. He also cited examples of their erstwhile collaborations with IIT Roorkee and IIT Kharagpur.

Ghosh highlighted the fresh perspective that young students can bring in these research areas and thereby bolster the process of knowledge production. The MoU signals a momentous partnership poised to make meaningful contributions to both academia as well as the society-at-large, he said.

## Meenakshi Cong women wing new president

Bhubaneswar: Keeping the 2024 general elections in view, the Odisha Pradesh Mahila Congress has appointed Meenakshi Bahinipati, wife of senior Congress leader and Jeypore MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati, as president of the party's women wing. This was informed by All India Congress Committee general secretary KC Venugopal in a press release. "Hon'ble Congress President has approved the proposal of the appointment of Meenakshi Bahinipati as the president of Odisha Pradesh Mahila Congress, with immediate effect," read the release. Meenakshi has already proven her mettle while discharging the responsibility of Koraput District Mahila Congress. She is also known as a powerful woman leader in southern parts of the state. It is worth mentioning that the Bahinipati couple had met Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge during the latter's Odisha visit Monday.

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# LAccMI boon for Rayagada residents

BUS SERVICE HELPING PEOPLE COMMUTE FROM REMOTE AREAS AND EKE OUT A LIVING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Jan 30: The state-launched Location Accessible Multi-modal Initiative (LAccMI) bus service has come as a huge boon in this tribal-dominated district. The service has enabled commuting to remote corners of the district at affordable prices, passengers said here Tuesday.

The Odisha government has recently launched LAccMI services in many districts of the state. Rayagada is one of the districts to benefit from the scheme. Students, farmers, traders and people of other professions are now utilising the facilities the service offers. The lack of transport facilities now appears like a distant dream.

Students Shankar Panda and Manisha said that earlier they had to spend Rs 75-100 on a daily basis to travel and return from their respective educational institutions. Now after the launch of the LAccMI service they have to spend at the most Rs 10 daily. Teacher Sahadev Bachheli said that earlier he had to spend a sizeable amount as he had to el-



ther go by an auto-rickshaw or his two-wheeler to his place of work (school) at Pipalgada under Kolnara block from his residence. Now he can do the needful for just Rs 30.

Farmers and small traders are all praise for the bus service. Earlier they had to spend a fortune on tempos or autos to bring their produce to this town. "We had to

41 BUSES INTRODUCED IN RAYAGADA OF WHICH 39 ARE IN OPERATION  
298 BUS STOPS WITH SHEDS BEING BUILT TO FACILITATE TRAVEL

shell out close to Rs 500 whenever we had to transport vegetables from our villages to this town," informed Shibaraj Mandangi, a farmer. "It was eating into our profits. Now, without any additional payment we can bring the produce to Rayagada. The bus service has definitely proved to be beneficial for us," he added.

Officials said that the Odisha government has introduced 41 buses for this district. Currently 39 are plying on different routes. Two have been kept as standby in case any of the buses develop a snag or need maintenance. They added that 298 bus stops with proper sheds are being constructed in 11 blocks of this district.

Manager of LAccMI scheme in this district, Soumya Ranjan Mishra informed that the construction of the designated bus stops will be completed soon. He added that the earnings through the service vary between Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000 on weekdays and Rs 25,000 to Rs 30,000 Sundays.

The LAccMI service has also changed the livelihood of many people in the district. As part of the women empowerment programme, Pinki Kandagiri has been appointed as a conductor. She failed to pursue education after Plus-II due to financial constraints. Now she earns a good amount to support her family and the financial crisis has disappeared.

# Rourkela gets 1st direct flight from Kolkata



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 30: The first direct flight from Kolkata arrived here Tuesday amid much fanfare. The Alliance Air flight was given a water cannon welcome when it arrived at the airport here around 2.00pm in the afternoon.

The Kolkata-Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela-Kolkata flight will operate every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, informed Alliance Air manager here Rahul Singh. However, even though the flight arrived here and left for Bhubaneswar, the final leg of the journey (Bhubaneswar-Rourkela-Kolkata) was abandoned due to various reasons.

In its maiden flight from Kolkata to here, the aircraft had 33 passengers and when it left for

Bhubaneswar, 44 people were on board. The flight arrived after two hours and 30 minutes delay, but people did not seem to mind.

However, there are still doubts as to whether the flights will happen in a seamless manner. This is because of the position of the airport here and other climatic issues. The airport has poor visibility as it is situated close to a hill range and due to early sunsets. Hence pilots are apprehensive about bringing the aircraft to the airport in the latter part of the day.

The delay in arrival and landing at the airport here was due to low visibility. Officials pointed out that until the Instrument Landing System (ILS) is installed at the airport, problems will plague flight services. They said that at present landings at the airport take place with staff trained in visual flight rule (VFR) using the approach control system. However, even then the VFR is not the safest operational procedure. In case a pilot feels that the aircraft and the passengers are at risk, he/she can always abort the landing.

# Jr engineer under Vigilance scanner



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 30: Vigilance sleuths conducted raids Tuesday on a number of properties of a junior engineer (JE) of the Water Resources Department in this district on charges of amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income, officials said Tuesday. The accused has been identified as Sanjay Kumar Mohanty. Among the places where raids were conducted were Mohanty's rented house and office.

During the raids officials seized Rs 1,48,000 in cash, a motorcycle, 30 ATM cards, passbooks of different banks and other important documents from Mohanty's house. Documents regarding a three-storey house in the name of a relative of Mohanty were also seized. Officials said that Mohanty owns two acres of land at Jaleswar in Balasore district.

A simultaneous raid was also conducted in Bhubaneswar at the house of Mohanty's in-laws. The sleuths also found Mohanty to be the owner of a flat and a four-wheeler.

It has been alleged that Mohanty demanded commission from contractors for allotting them work. Those who did not pay were denied contracts. An additional SP, three DSPs and eight inspectors were part of the raiding teams.

# BJP retains Dhiren as spokesperson

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 30: The president of the state unit of the BJP Manmohan Samal released Tuesday the names of spokespersons of the party in a press release. Ahead of the elections in Odisha, this is a significant development. Party veteran Dhiren Senapati has been retained as one of the spokespersons. Dhiren has been a member of the party since the 1990s.

Dhiren has been the president of Rourkela Nagar Mandal in the 1990s. Then he was given the responsibility to lead the party on two occasions as Sundargarh district president. He has also been secretary of the BJP unit in Odisha as well as the spokesperson.

"I am happy that the state unit has again bestowed its confidence in me to do my duty as its spokesperson. I have tried my level best to discharge my responsibility in the past and will also do so in future," Dhiren said. He also thanked Samal.

# Snag in boat leaves passengers stranded



POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, Jan 30: A total of 50 persons had a close shave with disaster after the boat they had boarded developed an engine snag Tuesday morning leaving them stranded on the Mahanadi for over three hours in Kendrapara district. The boat was on its way to Paradip from Bahakud-Musadia ghat. The boat had reached the middle of the river when it developed a mechanical problem and stopped. Initially there was no help

forthcoming. After more than three hours fishermen and locals noticed the boat and stranded passengers and rushed to their rescue. The passengers were accommodated in another boat and brought to the Bahakud-Musadia ghat from where they left for their respective destinations.

Passengers alleged that though they remained stranded in the middle of the river for over three hours, there was no help from the administration. They thanked the locals for saving them.

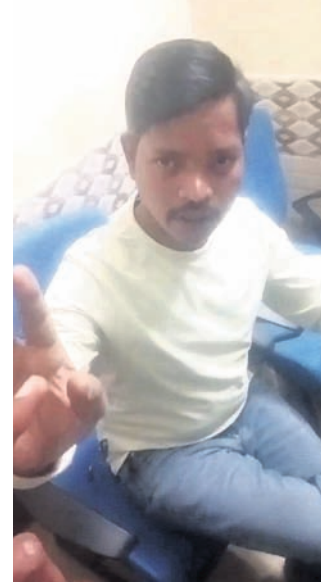
# Deceased's kin thrashes 'intoxicated' doc

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Jan 30: A doctor of the Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital here was thrashed mercilessly Monday night by the family members of a deceased for alleged negligence. The deceased, identified as Niku Barik, 30, from this town died as he was not attended to in a proper manner, his family alleged. They added that the doctor was also intoxicated and could not even talk in a proper manner.

Family members of Niku said he fell ill Monday and was admitted to the hospital in the evening in critical condition. Despite repeated requests, no one attended to Niku for a substantial period of time. Niku's condition deteriorated and he breathed his last. Finally at around 11.00pm a doctor came to check Niku.

However, by that time, Niku had already breathed his last. Relatives of the deceased found the doctor in an inebriated con-



dition when an argument broke out. The family members blamed the doctor for Niku's death and started thrashing him up. Finally security guards at the hospital rescued the doctor and whisked

him away to safety. Tension prevailed at the hospital Tuesday morning also. A large contingent of cops was seen moving inside the hospital complex keeping watch on the situation.

Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital superintendent Manasi Panda meanwhile informed Tuesday that a probe has been initiated to find out the truth about the allegations of the doctor being drunk. "We have formed a panel with six senior doctors to look into the incident. Action will be initiated if the allegations are true. Even though, I know the incident happened Monday night no formal complaint has been lodged with us or with the police," Panda informed.

It should be stated here that, scores of house surgeons of the Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital had staged a cease-work over an alleged assault on their colleague Biswaranjan Sahu December 29, 2023.

# Lone teacher for 129 students



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Jan 30: A total of 129 students of Ratan Bhoi Panchayat Samiti High School under Karlamunda block of Kalahandi district have only one permanent government teacher to teach them, a source informed here Tuesday.

According to the source, the school's mathematics teacher Purnachandra Rout remains the lone one in the school following the retirement of several teachers over the past few years.

Alongside Rout, five retired teachers have been appointed till March this year as guest tutors in a stop-gap arrangement.

The source informed that Rout is the only remaining permanent teacher in the school after the retirement of Nursingha Samanta in 2018, Pabitra Mohan Pasha in 2020, Basanta Patnaik, Pradipta Sarangi, and Benudhar Nag in 2022, and Markanda Padhi and Headmaster Prasanna Kumar Pradhan in 2023. Additionally, the school's clerk Ambilal Sahu is set to retire January 31.

When contacted, teacher Purnachandra said there is a shortage of teachers and classrooms. Earlier, more than 250 students were enrolled in the school, he added.

However, school managing committee chairman Nandi Kishore Bhoi said that the number of students is declining due to the shortage of teachers.

The residents of the area have demanded the district education department and the District Collector to look into the matter and appoint teachers.



CULTURE FEST: Artistes from Kala 'O' Kalakar cultural outfit performed the 'Panchabadya' recital Tuesday as part of the celebrations to mark the public dedication of SAMALEI project in Sambalpur

# 'Hanu Man' helps Rayagada man achieve fame

Milan worked as the assistant director of the Telugu film which has become a super hit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Jan 30: Milan Kumar Nayak, a resident of this town, has carved a niche for himself by working as the assistant director in the recently-released super hit Telugu film *Hanu Man*, sources said here Tuesday. Milan's father was an employee of a paper mill here while his mother is a homemaker.

*Hanu Man* which hit theatre screens across the country January 12, has drawn applause from the viewers for blending

the traditional genre of the devotional story with contemporary superhero narrative. It has received huge praise from all sections of the society.

The film has so far done business of over Rs 275 crores. However, such is the popularity of the film that it may even cross the Rs 500-crore mark.

Sources said that film-making was not the initial choice of Milan. After earning a B-Tech degree in engineering, he worked in a multi-national company for three years. However, he had a penchant for films since childhood and it finally drew him to the world of film making. This love for movies grew after he watched plays and films on a regular basis.



Milan has worked as assistant director so far in four films. However, it is because of the success of *Hanu Man* he has been lauded for his directorial skills. Milan was born at JKPur in

Rayagada district. He, after completing his Plus II, did his B.Tech from Paralakhemundi. However, his passion for films took him to Mumbai. He has also worked as assistant director in two Hindi

films titled *Lupt* and *Modiji Ki Beti*. Milan shifted to Hyderabad in 2019 where he directed two Telugu films. Then he joined the unit of *Hanu Man*. He handled sets, post production and screenplay and other aspects of film making.

When contacted, Milan said he hopes to work as a full-fledged director in future. He also expressed his interest to work in Odia films if he is given a chance. He said that a person can certainly achieve his goals if he has a strong will. He added that he still remembers his initial days of struggle, but it has 'helped him to grow'. Milan is currently living here with his family who are overjoyed with his success. They are hoping that he continues to achieve success in all his future endeavours.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER  
RAIRANGPUR IRRIGATION DIVISION, RAIRANGPUR  
e-mail: eerrpureicwr.od@gov.in / eerrpurdvnm@gmail.com  
No.A-1323 'e' - Procurement Notice No.04 RID/2023-24

1	Name of works	Canal improvement work, Bank protection works and Road & Bridge works as mentioned in the website.
2	Total No. of works	18 Nos. (Eighteen) only
3	Amount put to tender	Varies from 7.57 Lakh to 39.54 Lakh
4	Class of contractor	'D', 'C' & 'B'
5	Period of completion	As mentioned against work.
6	Other details as follows:	
(i)	Procurement Officer	Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur
(ii)	Availability of tender online for bidding	01.02.2024 from 10.00 hours to 12.02.2024 upto 17.00 hours.
(iii)	Date, time and place of opening of bid	On 13.02.2024 at 11.00 hours in the O/o the Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur.
(iv)	Date of Transparent Lottery to be conducted (if required)	On 17.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M. in the O/o the Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur.

Further details can be seen from the 'e' Procurement Portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer,  
Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur  
OIPR-32349/11/0007/2324

Delight is the secret. Learn of pure delight and thou shalt learn of God.

SRI AUROBINDO



Hijab & Polls

As the country is fast gearing towards the Lok Sabha election mode to elect a new government at the Centre, there are tell-tale signs of the electoral strategies of the two main contenders - the BJP and the Congress - seem to be getting ready to adopt.

After Acharya visited the Government Girls' Secondary School in Jaipur's Gangapol locality 29 January, a video surfaced showing him pulling up a school administrator over some students wearing the hijab.

The Moslem students were so enraged by the outrageous behaviour of the MLA that they gheraoed the Subhash Chowk police station, demanding that the MLA stop "vitiatng the atmosphere in schools" and apologise for his actions.

After the incident, Moslem and Hindoo students submitted separate complaints to the police. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Jaipur North) Rashi Dogra said the complaints had been forwarded to the District Collector.

Minister Meena went further and parroted the BJP's favourite line of political argument that because of "the fanaticism in the Muslim community" and "the appeasement politics" of the Congress, the community has not been able to progress.

In fact, a controversy around the hijab in educational institutions raged in December 2021 in Karnataka when six college students in Udipi district were denied entry because of the head covering. The then BJP government of that state had also issued a circular that pre-university colleges must adhere to the dress code.

Meanwhile, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge lashed out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi 29 January saying that he would bring dictatorship if voted back to power. Addressing a rally in Bhubaneswar, Kharge appealed to people to save democracy, and expressed the fear that if Modi wins this coming Lok Sabha polls, there will not be another election after that.

Ironically, Kharge seems to have conceded defeat when he said the BJP will get 200, 300, 400 and 500 seats. Then in an act of desperation tinged with despondency he told voters that they can either save democracy or become slaves "like under the British regime."

The Congress appears to have messed up the attempts to stitch together a viable Opposition by denying Nitish Kumar the post of the convener of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA). The post is coveted in the sense that it puts the leader occupying it ahead of others in the bloc in the race to become the next PM in the event of victory.

Whatever Nitish's credibility, it is no denying the fact that his departure from the Opposition camp makes the task of overthrowing the BJP even more difficult. Kharge was economical with truth when he asserted that Nitish's exit from INDIA would not weaken the bloc. How these acts play out on the broader election screen will be seen by all of us very soon.

WISDOM CORNER

- In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock. THOMAS JEFFERSON
The doctor sees all the weakness of mankind; the lawyer all the wickedness, the theologian all the stupidity. ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER
To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1943: German Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus surrendered to the Soviet Red Army at Stalingrad (now Volgograd), his troops surrendering two days later.
1958: Explorer 1 was the first artificial space satellite orbited by the United States, marking the country's entry into the space race.
1966: The Soviets launched Luna 9, the first spacecraft to make a soft landing on the Moon.
1996: A suicide bombing in Sri Lanka kills 91 people. Separatist Tamil Tigers detonated a truck loaded with explosives in front of the central bank in Colombo.
2000: Alaska Airlines flight 261 crashes into the sea. The MD-83 experienced horizontal stabilizer problems before descending into the Pacific Ocean, killing all 88 passengers on board.
2011: Myanmar's first elected parliament in half a century convenes. The event underlined a general move towards democracy in the country.

LOL

The crowded store

It was the day of the big sale. Rumours of the sale (and some advertising in the local paper) were the main reason for the long line that formed by 8:30 am, the store's opening time, in front of the store. A small man pushed his way to the front of the line, only to be pushed



back, amid loud and colourful curses. On the man's second attempt, he was punched square in the jaw, and knocked around a bit, and then thrown to the end of the line again. As he got up the second time, he said to the person at the end of the line... "That does it! If they hit me one more time, I won't open the store!"

'THE REST' REJECT THE WEST

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS



For those who lived through the Cold War and witnessed how Western powers dealt with post-colonial states and their peoples, recent events are all too familiar

As the war in Gaza enters its fourth month, many in the Middle East and across the Global South have been struck both by the ferocity of Israel's military campaign and by Western governments' unwavering support for it. To them, this is as much US President Joe Biden's war as it is Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's, and the continuing indifference to the scale of the devastation has reaffirmed how cheap Arab lives appear to be to Western leaders.



Fawaz A. Gerges

BIDEN CLAIMED TO REPRESENT A CLEAN BREAK FROM TRUMP, BUT THERE IS NO DAYLIGHT BETWEEN THEM WHEN IT COMES TO THE MIDDLE EAST

For those who lived through the Cold War and witnessed how Western powers dealt with post-colonial states and their peoples, recent events are all too familiar. As I argue in my new book, What Really Went Wrong: The West and the Failure of Democracy in the Middle East, the United States and other Western countries, mainly the United Kingdom, have for nearly a century pursued an interventionist, militaristic, and anti-democratic foreign policy that largely ignores Middle Eastern peoples' interests.

In pursuit of these twin aims, the US offered Middle Eastern leaders a zero-sum choice: either join in Western-led regional defense alliances and open your economy to global capital, or be considered a foe. In the name of maintaining stability and securing an uninterrupted flow of cheap oil, Western powers struck devil's pacts with Middle Eastern autocrats and actively contributed to the demise of incipient democratic movements.

Notably, in the early 1950s, when the liberal democrat Mohammed Mossadegh became prime minister of Iran and nationalised the country's oil, the CIA and MI6 orchestrated a coup and replaced him with the Shah. That self-interested intervention arrested Iran's democratic development and set the stage for the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which ushered in the theocratic regime that

rules to this day.

Similarly, in the 1950s, Gamal Abdel Nasser, a charismatic leader who was positively disposed toward the US, became president of Egypt and decided that it was not in his country's interest to join a Western-led defense pact. Seeking to humiliate him and force his ouster, America and Britain rescinded support for the massive Aswan High Dam project on the Nile River. What resulted was the Suez Crisis of 1956, which almost caused a world war. In the end, the most popular leader of the most populous Arab state became a bitter enemy of the West.

While the US-led West has certainly taken a heavy-handed approach in other regions as well, Western officials have long rationalised their neo-imperial mission in the Middle East by claiming that the combination of Islam and Arab culture is incompatible with democracy. The implication is that brutal strongmen are essential to the stability that the West so values.

The lesson for those strongmen has been unambiguous: repression and human-rights abuses will be ignored as long as America's orders are followed. For the people of the region, the lesson has been no less plain: their lives and rights mean little in the West's calculus - notwithstanding all its lofty rhetoric about democracy and the rule of law. The invasion and decades-long occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq made that

abundantly clear.

Barack Obama was the first US president to hint at a different approach. Speaking at the US Military Academy at West Point in 2014, he decried America's perpetual wartime footing and tendency to shoot first and ask questions later. America's costliest mistakes in the region had come not from restraint, he argued, but from the "willingness to rush into military adventures without thinking through the consequences - without building international support and legitimacy for ... action; without leveling with the American people about the sacrifices required."

Sadly, Obama's sober perspective appears to be lost on Biden, who belongs to the Cold War generation of American leadership. Until last October, Biden had devoted little time or attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He readily accepted the untenable status quo of perpetual Palestinian suffering, and focused instead on trying to expand the Abraham Accords. Those agreements, brokered by the Trump administration, sought to normalise Israel's relations with Arab autocrats in exchange for security assistance and protection, thereby ending the region's commitment to Palestinian statehood.

Since Hamas' brutal attack on October 7 - which exposed the folly of Biden and Netanyahu's approach - there has been nei-

ther restraint nor an effort to think through the consequences of the current war. Instead, Biden and his European allies have wholeheartedly endorsed Israel's all-out assault on Gaza. Even as the civilian death toll has risen at an unprecedented pace, the humanitarian crisis grows more acute by the day, and governments around the world have called for a ceasefire, Biden has shown no willingness to intervene to stop the bloodshed.

Meanwhile, skirmishes on the Israel-Lebanon border and US-led airstrikes on Houthi positions in Yemen and Iranian-backed militias in Iraq suggest that the conflict may yet escalate further. America and Britain are gradually being sucked into the region yet again, though with eyes wide open this time. Biden claimed to represent a clean break from Trump, but there is no daylight between them when it comes to the Middle East. There and in much of the Global South, Biden will be remembered as just another American president who devalued Arab lives, preaching democracy while supporting repression and violence.

Biden may soon regret his wholehearted embrace of Netanyahu in recent months. Netanyahu, an expert at manipulating the American political process, recently rebuffed Biden's support for establishing a Palestinian state, insisting that Israel must have security control "over all the territory west of the Jordan [River]." That pronouncement was timed to the start of the US presidential campaign, in which Trump is his preferred candidate.

Even if Biden ultimately secures a second term, the tragic irony is that the Middle East is less stable today than at any point in its modern history. The West's strategy has been a colossal failure, and this legacy will burden our world for a very long time.

The writer is Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics. ©Project Syndicate

SPECTRUM IN JEST THIS

One dog is quite enough for me



Melvin Durai

I HAVE SEEN PEOPLE WALKING TWO DOGS AT THE SAME TIME, AND THEY USUALLY LOOK TWICE AS TIRED AS ME

Every now and then, I see an internet post from a dog owner who wants to rehome the dog. To "rehome" a pet is to find a new home for the pet, passing on the responsibilities to someone else. Taking care of a dog isn't always easy, and I have to admit that on rare occasions, when I'm walking my dog, Lulu, in extremely cold weather, the thought of rehoming her has crossed my mind.

But I always banish the thought. I never bring it up with my wife, Malathi. She would never rehome Lulu, not without first considering rehoming me. Given a choice between Lulu and me, my wife would choose the family member who has never barked at her.

Malathi loves animals, especially dogs. When she hears that someone wants to rehome their dog, her first reaction is to send me an email: "Can we please have this dog?"

My response is always the

same: "Okay, but only if they're willing to take Lulu in exchange."

I am kidding about this, of course. I like Lulu and would not trade her for anything that doesn't have wheels.

A few months ago, Malathi wanted to adopt a St. Bernard that someone was trying to rehome. Malathi persuaded me to accompany her on a visit to the St. Bernard's home to conduct a dog interview of sorts. She was hoping I would fall in love with the dog. But this was never going to happen, because in my eyes, any dog I met would be known as "second dog." And for me to fall in love with "second dog," something incredible would need to happen, such as "second dog" playing Beethoven's "Sonata No. 29" on a piano.

Short of that, I wouldn't be taking "second dog" home with me. In the case of the St. Bernard, there was no hint of any piano talent, just the prospect of having a dog as big as a piano.

This dog was indeed huge. Lulu is fairly big herself—she's a Siberian husky—but the St. Bernard was on another level. Taking him home would be like taking home "second, third and fourth dogs combined."

Thankfully, Malathi didn't push me too hard to adopt the St. Bernard, perhaps realising that he was a little too big, and there'd be no room for her on our couch.

But she still wishes she could get a second dog, still wishes she had not married a one-dog man. That's why I offer this advice to all couples: before you get married, make sure you discuss not only how many children you'd like to have, but also how many dogs, cats, chickens and goats. Otherwise, you are just setting yourself up for disappointment.

It is possible, of course, to persuade your partner to see things your way. This is what Malathi did with children. We agreed to have two children, but she per-

suaded me to have a third child by using the tried-and-true persuasive technique of waving a positive pregnancy test in my face.

Trust me, if Malathi could get a second dog the same way, she would.

But persuading me to get a second dog is a difficult task, because I know how much responsibility a single dog requires. I also learned, way back in primary school, how to multiply by two. My wife, of course, tells me that two dogs do not involve twice as much responsibility as one dog. I can take them for walks at the same time, she says. But I have seen people walking two dogs at the same time, and they usually look twice as tired as me.

I should mention that my wife doesn't just want a second dog—she also wants a cat. Unfortunately, I'm allergic to cats.

Perhaps I should have mentioned that before we got married.

Deep-rooted dysfunction

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinions and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST logo and contact information: B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Sir, The political landscape of India is witnessing seismic shifts as Nitish Kumar, a stalwart of the Opposition alliance, makes a dramatic exit, rejoining the BJP-led NDA. This move, undoubtedly, deals a devastating blow to the grand Opposition coalition, INDIA, arriving at a critical juncture when the BJP rides high on the momentum garnered from the Ram temple inauguration in Ayodhya, with the 2024 general elections looming ominously close. Nitish Kumar's exit from the INDIA bloc, Mamata Banerjee's scathing remarks against the Congress and Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann's announcement that his party AAP would contest independently in Punjab severing ties with Congress, underscore the deep-rooted dysfunction within the Opposition alliance. These developments lay bare the inadequacies that have plagued the coalition, rendering previous meetings and negotiations futile. The failure to achieve cohesion on key aspects such as seat-sharing, strategy formulation, and communication has severely undermined the Opposition's effectiveness on the ground. Instead of presenting a united front, internal discord and ego clashes have eroded the alliance's credibility and strength. However, all these developments would only pave the way for BJP's straight third victory.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Rhino killings

Sir, After an uneventful 2022 when no rhino was harmed in the famous Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve of Assam, 2023 witnessed two rhino killings, one with its horn missing, in Kaziranga. Now, poachers have struck again by killing an adult female rhino and decamping with its horn. Local poachers, hand-in-glove with international smugglers, pose a big threat to the rhinos numbering 2,613. The task force, with dedicated commandos, setup by the Assam government, did a commendable job by ensuring no poaching of the endangered animals in 2022. So, it can safely be assumed that there was a massive breach in security or a few unscrupulous elements in the park were hand-in-glove with the poachers that resulted in the rhino killings of late. The entire security apparatus including the CCTV cameras require an extensive examination and overhaul. At the same time, a methodical review of logistics, personnel and training would not be out of place.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



# Won't allow CAA in Bengal as long as I am alive: Mamata

The Bengal CM's remarks were prompted by Union minister and BJP leader Shantanu Thakur's recent assertion that the CAA would be rolled out across the country within a week



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Raiganj (WB), Jan 30:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday lambasted the BJP for raising the CAA issue ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, asserting that she will never allow its implementation in the state during her lifetime. Speaking at a programme at Raiganj in Uttar Dinajpur district, she alleged that the BJP 'opportunistically raised' the issue of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA ahead of the upcoming elections. "With elections approaching, the BJP has again raked up the CAA issue to reap political benefits. But let me make it very clear that as long as I am alive, I will not allow its implementation in West Bengal," Banerjee

before December 31, 2014. Expressing alarm over reports of the Border Security Force (BSF) allegedly issuing separate identity cards to residents in border areas, Banerjee cautioned people against accepting such cards, labelling those as potential tools in an 'NRC trap.' "They are issuing separate identity cards to people living in border areas. Never accept these cards. This is a trap," Banerjee warned, emphasising the need for vigilance among border communities. Banerjee's assertions align with her earlier claims in Cooch Behar district, where she accused the BSF of similar actions, a charge denied by the paramilitary force. The CM rallied support against what she characterised as an alliance between the Congress, CPI(M), and BJP in West Bengal, urging people to unite under the Trinamool Congress (TMC) banner to counter this perceived threat. "It is the TMC that is fighting for the rights of the people of the state. We all have to unite to defeat the Congress-CPI(M)-BJP nexus in Bengal," Banerjee said, calling for solidarity among citizens. Her remarks follow her recent announcement of the TMC's decision to contest the upcoming Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal alone.



Congress workers raise slogans during a protest against BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari over his alleged controversial remark on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, in Kolkata, Tuesday

# CPI(M) ensures bigger role in Rahul's yatra

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Jan 30:** As now it is almost certain that Trinamool Congress will not be participating in the Congress' second phase of Nyay Yatra within the territory of West Bengal starting with Malda district from January 31, the CPI(M) leadership has promised bigger and more heavyweight participation in that programme of the country's oldest national party. The Nyay Yatra, Monday, entered Bihar and from Wednesday it will start its second phase in West Bengal from Malda district. CPI(M) insiders said that while there was participation



from the party's district-level leadership at the rally at Jalpaiguri and Siliguri towns led by Rahul Gandhi Sunday, in the second phase there will be participation from the party's central-level leadership, including politburo and central committee. As of now, the participation of

the CPI(M) politburo member and the party's state secretary in West Bengal Md Salim and the CPI(M) central committee member Sujana Chakraborty in the second phases of Nyay Yatra is also confirmed. Congress leadership has specially invited the most prominent youth face in CPI(M) and the state president of party's youth wing Minakshi Mukherjee to specially mark her presence at the rally. Mukherjee will also participate in Nyay Yatra's second phase, said sources. Meanwhile, with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee having already made clear that Trinamool Congress will go alone

in the state in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election, the CPI(M) leadership wants to begin the seat-sharing talks with Congress now at the earliest. "On one hand, the Bihar Chief Minister has officially broken away from the Opposition INDIA bloc. Although Mamata Banerjee has not made any similar breakup announcement with the bloc, she has made her intentions clear of going alone in West Bengal. So this is the right time to start mutual seat-sharing talks with Congress and we will appeal to the Congress leadership to start the process at the earliest," said a central committee member of the party.

# Adhir responsible for 'failed' Cong-TMC talks: Abhishek



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Jan 30:** Trinamool Congress national general secretary and Lok Sabha MP Abhishek Banerjee has held West Bengal Congress chief and five-time MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury for the failed alliance talks between the Congress and the Trinamool Congress in the state with regard to the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. "There is a limit to anyone's patience. Mamata Banerjee is constantly steering movements against the BJP. She has always been vocal against the Centre neglecting the people of West Bengal. But here she is being targeted by Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury. I want to ask him, how many times has he been vocal about Central negligence towards the people of West

Bengal," Abhishek Banerjee told newsmen, Monday. He also accused the Congress leadership in general for not showing any interest about initiating seat-sharing talks with the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal. "People will realise who is actually responsible for this. Mamata Banerjee has time and again insisted on concluding the dialogue process for seat-sharing by December 31 last year. But no one initiated this discussion. The Opposition INDIA bloc is actually an alliance of the people. People will now decide whom to vote for," he said. Banerjee also made a statement for the first time since the incident on the attack on ED and CAPF officials at Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district January 5. According to him, what had happened at Sandeshkhali was unfortunate and should not have happened. "I am not supporting anybody. The ED officials can go anywhere and conduct search operations at anyone's place. But I want to ask just one question to the ED officials. They were there for three hours. The media came to know about that, but the local police did not," Banerjee said.

# Indigenous communities 'target' of conversion

ASSAM CM SAYS IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PRESERVE AGE-OLD BELIEF SYSTEMS AS THESE ARE INTEGRAL TO THE COUNTRY'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dibrugarh (Assam), Jan 30:** Indigenous communities of India have often become 'target' of conversion attempts by mainstream religions, with individuals enticed through 'temptation of material benefit', Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has claimed. He urged younger generations to keep alive the indigenous faiths and religions, while also outlining the measures taken by his government in this regard. Sarma was speaking at the inaugural session of the 8th International Conference and Gathering of Elders here, which will continue till February 1. It has been organised by the International Centre for Cultural Studies (ICCS), a non-profit socio-cultural forum for spiritual masters of ancient traditions and cultures of the world. Emphasising the importance of indigenous faiths and culture globally as well as in India and Assam, which are home to several tribes and communities, Sarma said it is essential to preserve these age-old belief systems as these are integral to the



country's cultural landscape. "Unfortunately, indigenous communities in India often become the target of conversion efforts by mainstream religions. Missionary activities carried out by various religious groups can result in a decline of population who practise indigenous faith," the CM maintained. He claimed that the "temptation of material benefit, education and healthcare benefits provided by missionary organisations influence indi-

**In order to preserve the indigenous faiths, the Assam government has created the Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture department**

viduals to convert." This leads to the gradual erosion of indigenous religious practises and decline in population following these faiths has

an adverse impact on culture and practises, he added. Sarma said it is the duty of the younger generations to abide by the indigenous faiths and practises as it is essential to preserve ancient wisdom passed down through generations. He recalled the contributions of Birsa Munda in this regard and also how Mahatma Gandhi had strongly opposed mass conversions, particularly those influenced by 'external factors'. In order to preserve the indigenous faiths, the Assam government has created the Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture department, which is working round-the-clock towards this end, Sarma said. "We are offering budgetary support to indigenous communities, trying to see external factors which influence conversion are minimised and promoting and creating respect for indigenous faith, religion and culture," Sarma added. Stressing that majority community has more responsibility in preserving indigenous faith and culture, the CM added, "If they try to eliminate the indigenous faiths, it will be the saddest day for the world."

# Assam among top five states in NEP implementation: Guv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, Jan 30:** Assam is among the top five states in the country in the progress of implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Governor Gulab Chand Kataria said Tuesday. Speaking to reporters after a review meeting of NEP implementation in higher education institutions, he said some challenges were still there in enforcing it completely and work was on to overcome those. "Assam is among the top five states so far as progress in implementing the policy is concerned. We have invited the vice-chancellors to ask them about the problems being faced in enforcing the NEP," he said. Kataria said this was the third review meeting, and experts have been invited to guide the government. "Some challenges are there, especially low enrolment rates," the Governor said, adding that the reasons are being looked into. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma raised concerns over the 'stagnant' gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education in the last 10 years as the recent All India Survey on Higher Education has revealed. The GER is stuck in the 17-18 per cent range despite massive investments in the higher education system in the last decade, he said, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). Sarma indicated exploring the possibility of introducing a new system of scholarship for higher education. The CM urged the officials and heads of higher education institutions to work on a uniform academic calendar and root out ills like nepotism and favouritism, the statement added. Education Minister Ranaj Pegu told reporters after the meeting, "There are various milestones under NEP to be achieved till 2035. Periodic reviews are done to assess the progress and this was one such meeting." Along with state and central government stakeholders, authorities of private universities attended the review meeting, he added.

## PADMA SHRI TO SARBESWAR BASUMATARY

# A DAILY WAGER TURNED FARMER'S JOURNEY TO FAME

BASUMATARY ALONG WITH TWO OTHERS - THE FIRST INDIAN WOMAN MAHOUT PARBATI BARUA IN THE SOCIAL WORK CATEGORY, AND FOLK-ARTISTE DRONA BHUYAN IN THE ART CATEGORY - WERE SELECTED FOR PADMA SHRI AWARDS FROM ASSAM THIS YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chirang (Assam), Jan 30:** From a daily wage labourer to winning Padma Shri, the country's fourth highest civilian award, Assam's 61-year-old tribal farmer Sarbeswar Basumatary's journey to fame was fraught with many trials and tribulations along the way. Basumatary, a resident of the remote Panbari village of Chirang district, has emerged as a model for all in mixed integrated farming. Integrated farming means all types of agriculture - fruits and vegetable farming, poultry farming, rice-fish farming and mixed

farming in one farm. Belonging to the Bodo community, Basumatary has earned the sobriquet 'Chirang Ka Krishi Chiragra' (the lamp of Chirang's farms). "As a member of a family belonging to the below poverty line, I studied only till the primary level and this lack of formal higher education posed many hurdles during my journey in the field of agriculture," Basumatary told PTL. During that period, he was faced with acute financial insecurity coupled with the problems of insurgency in the Bodoland region. "The initial hurdles to be



crossed included adequate finances for investment into agriculture, lack of proper facilities, and lack of knowledge of scientific methods. Chirang was

a backward area," Basumatary said. With willpower, focus, and hard work, he overcame those challenges.

Continued support and cooperation of officials at the district and state levels helped him in his agricultural work, the farmer said. "Since 1995, I encouraged the unemployed youth to get involved in agriculture. I tried to lead by example in order to increase their interest," he said. Basumatary said that the agricultural products from his fields are sold locally and also in the markets of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and various remote areas of the North East. "Winning this award is a huge honour for me. This is still a dream for me. Now I have a

strong desire to inspire the young generation to get associated with agriculture, nursery or the horticulture sector," he said. Basumatary said success is inevitable if people stick to a work with focus and determination. He was also awarded the Assam government's third highest civilian award 'Assam Gaurav' for the year 2022-23. Basumatary along with two others - the first Indian woman mahout Parbati Barua in the social work category, and folk-artist Drona Bhuyan in the art category - were selected for Padma Shri awards from the state this year.



A group of Joaldunak called Zantantzar, take part in the carnival between the Pyrenees villages of Ituren and Zubietza, northern Spain

AP



President Droupadi Murmu pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi on Martyrs' Day, observed to mark the death anniversary of the father of the nation, at Rajghat in New Delhi

PTI



A boat makes its way through a pod of common dolphins fleeing from an Orca off Point Loma, in San Diego. Biologists believe that the Orcas may stay around for a while due to abundance of their preferred food, common dolphins

AP/PTI



The Grenadier Guards of the Life Guards at the Royal Palace in Stockholm, Sweden. France's President Emmanuel Macron started a two-day state visit in Stockholm during which he will meet Swedish Prime Minister, Ulf Kristersson, and the country's monarch, King Carl XVI Gustaf

AP



A 'Theyyam' artiste hoists 'Thirumudi' (Royal crown) of Muchilottu Bhagavathi during the 'Perumkaliyattam' festival at Muchilottu Bhagavathi Temple at Vengara in Kannur, Kerala

PTI



Artistes perform during the presentation of the best tableau and contingent award in the Republic Day parade 2024, in New Delhi

PTI



A reveller teases a child during a traditional carnival celebrating the departing winter and forthcoming spring in the village of Hamry near the east Bohemian town of Hlinsko, Czech Republic

REUTERS



Skaters play hockey, at an Ice-Skating Rink in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

PTI



national

of the day quote

India's greater capability, our own interest and our reputation today warrant that we actually help out in difficult situations

Till the development of villages, poor people, labourers and farmers does not take place, the country will not progress.

If Narendra Modi wins another election, there will be dictatorship in the country.

SHORT TAKES

Teacher shoots 2 colleagues dead

Godda (Jharkhand): A teacher allegedly shot dead two colleagues at a government school in Jharkhand's Godda district over a "love affair"...

ED questions Tejashwi Yadav

Patna: Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav is being questioned by ED sleuths here in connection with the agency's money laundering probe into the alleged land-for-jobs scam...

ED to question Soren today

Ranchi/New Delhi, Jan 30: Ending suspense over his whereabouts, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Tuesday reached his official residence in Ranchi and chaired meetings of his alliance MLAs, ahead of his scheduled questioning by the ED in a money laundering case.

CHANDIGARH MAYORAL POLLS

AAP moves HC, seeks fresh polls

Chandigarh, Jan 30: The Aam Aadmi Party Tuesday moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court, seeking setting aside the mayoral poll results and demanding fresh elections under the supervision of a retired HC judge.

Budget Session begins today

New Delhi, Jan 30: The Budget Session of Parliament, the last of the present Lok Sabha, begins Wednesday with an address by President Droupadi Murmu to a joint sitting...

Jaswant Singh's daughter-in-law killed in car crash

Alwar: Congress leader Manvendra Singh's wife was killed and the former MP and his son were injured when their SUV met with an accident in Alwar on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway...

ED questions Soren today

Ranchi, Jan 30: Ending suspense over his whereabouts, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Tuesday reached his official residence in Ranchi and chaired meetings of his alliance MLAs...

15 PFI workers get death penalty

Sreenivasan, a lawyer and the BJP OBC Morcha state secretary, was brutally attacked and killed in his home on December 19, 2021, in front of his family...



Alappuzha (Ker), Jan 30: A Kerala court Tuesday sentenced to death 15 people associated with the now-banned outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) in connection with the murder of BJP OBC wing leader Ranjith Sreenivasan...

murder and the preparations might have started months ago. "So, I am of the view that the defenseless victim had never provoked the accused and the commission of offence was a pre-meditated one"...

Budget Session begins today

17th Lok Sabha's brief session, set to conclude February 9, was the President's Address, the presentation of the Interim Budget and the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address with a reply by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

ED questions Soren today

Ranchi, Jan 30: Ending suspense over his whereabouts, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Tuesday reached his official residence in Ranchi and chaired meetings of his alliance MLAs...

Navy rescues 2 hijacked vessels

New Delhi, Jan 30: The Indian Navy rescued an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel with 19 Pakistani crew members and a Sri Lankan trawler in two swift operations after armed pirates hijacked the boats in the Arabian Sea...

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR. "e" Procurement Notice for Road Works. Identification No. Online Tender / 27/ RWDBNJ/ 2023-2024.

Government of Odisha "e" procurement Notice. e-mail ID-rw\_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in, Phone No. 0663-2401850. Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE SBPR-18 OF 2023-24.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, JASHIPUR GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE. BID IDENTIFICATION NO.: 07 MID JSP/2023-24.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, DHENKANAL. No.2177 Dt.25.01.2024 e-Procurement Notice. Bid Identification No. DMID/12/2023-24.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BARIPADA. e-Procurement Tender Call Notice No. Online 25/RWD/BPD/2023-24.





